Rt. 8, Frederick, Md.

10/15/69

Dear Mark,

I hope you will understand that I cannot really afford to take the time from work for correspondence that largely duplicates what I have already published.

Of the events you plan to treat, I think you will find more than you need in these books, with relatively little by way of solving "the mystery of Hiddell".

The paraffin test is not affirmatively conclusive but can be negatively. Nitrate deposits can come from a veriety of sources. Therefore, the presence of nitrate traces on Oswald's hands is not proof he fired a weapon. However, the absence of any traces on his cheek is pretty conclusive proof he did not fire a rifle.

I have no reason not to believe the official account, that Oswald did have the Hidell papers

It is not possible to answer this question, "What are your feelings about the Sibert-O'Neill report on the autopsy of President Kennedy" without writing a book. First of all, despite the contrary propagonda by those not as concerned with precision and truth as they might be, this is not a "report on the autopsy" in the sense used. It is, rather, the report of the agents whose apparent assignment was to keep an eye on the Secret Service agents also there. It goes into much more than the autopsy. It is not generally understood chiefly because those who first used it in public had nothing to do with funding it, therefore, had no logical train they were pursuing. They used it as sensation, which it is, but in so doing, they also misued it. To give you a short answer, it is a very important document and much of what it says is true. It is also in some respect erroneous and incomplete.

WHITEWASH was the first book. There was tremenduous reluctance among publishers to touch the subject except as support for the official position. In publishing it myself I incurred the enmity of those who didn't want the subject opened. In making a success of a non-commercial book, I angered publishers, into whose domain I trespassed. Dell rejected my first book three times, then reprinted it, coming to me for it. They also rejected the second, and again came to me for it after I published it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg